

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON INTERIM AGREEMENT

FOR UNDERSECRETARY SISCO FROM AMBASSADOR TOON

I SPOKE BRIEFLY ON BACKGROUND WITH DRUMMOND ON SEPT. 5 IN EFFORT TO PUT IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE AND CORRECT DISTORTIONS IN ISRAELIS' LEAKED VERSIONS OF US UNDERSTANDINGS WHICH HAVE BEEN SURFACING REGULARLY IN ISRAELI PRESS OVER PAST WEEK. DRUMMOND PIECE IS BADLY GARBLED VERSION OF WHAT I SAID. FOLLOWING IS RECONSTRUCTION OF HIGH POINTS MY REMARKS BASED ON NOTES OF EMBASSY PRESS OFFICER WHO WAS PRESENT:

AMB. TOON AND DRUMMOND DISCUSSED IN GENERAL TERMS THE DIFFICULT PHYSICAL DEMANDS OF "SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY" AND EXTRAORDINARY ABILITIES OF SEC. KISSINGER TO MEET THE DEMANDS IMPOSED BY LENGTHY NEGOTIATIONS.

QUESTIONS AND BACKGROUND ANSWERS FOLLOWED:

Q: HOW WILL SURVEILLANCE STATIONS WORK? HOW STAFFED: HOW EFFICIENT IN GUARDING AGAINST SNEAK ATTACKS?

A: AMB. TOON SAID HE DID NOT PRETEND EXPERTISE, SUGGESTED DRUMMOND MIGHT SEE DEFENSE ATTACHE FOR GENERAL INFORMATION, THAT HE DID NOT FEEL ANY FACILITY COULD GIVE COMPLETE ASSURANCE, THAT DETAILS OF MANNING WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT AT GENEVA AND WITH
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CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. THREE AMERICAN-MANNED STATIONS PLUS

THREE UNMANNED STATIONS WOULD BE IN PASSES; UM HASHIBA STATION WOULD BE TECHNICALLY MANAGED BY AMERICANS BUT IN FACT OPERATED BY ISRAELI PERSONNEL.

Q: WHAT IS THE UNITED STATES TO GIVE IN ECONOMIC AND OTHER AID?

A: AMBASSADOR SAID PROPOSALS ARE CONFIDENTIAL: "I CAN'T TELL YOU." THE AMBASSADOR SAID ISRAELIS HAVE LEAKED SOME INFORMATION, AND HE MENTIONED DAVID LANDAU'S JERUSALEM POST ARTICLE. BASICALLY, THE SO-CALLED MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT IS ROUGHLY ALONG THE LINES REPORTED BY LANDAU AND OTHERS, BUT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF INACCURACIES. AS EXAMPLE, AMBASSADOR MENTIONED REPORTED PLEDGE TO AID ISRAEL AGAINST SOVIET INTERVENTION. THIS HAS NOT BEEN SPELLED OUT IN THE AGREEMENT, BUT HELP TO ISRAEL AGAINST THIS OR OTHER MAJOR THREAT IS "INHERENT IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL," SAID THE AMBASSADOR.

THE AMBASSADOR TOLD DRUMMOND THAT HE COULD REPORT THE DISPLEASURE OF "AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL" OVER LEAKS TO PRESS BY ISRAELIS, THAT HE FELT LEAKING OF INFORMATION "VERY IRRESPONSIBLE," THOUGH HE RECOGNIZED DIFFICULTIES OF KEEPING SECRETS HERE.

Q: WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR NEGOTIATION WITH SYRIA?

A: THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT IT IS OBVIOUS TO BOTH ISRAEL AND EGYPT THAT NEGOTIATIONS CANNOT BE HELD IN ISOLATION. SYRIAN PROBLEM IS DIFFICULT. "WHILE IT IS HARD TO SEE WHAT TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS CAN BE MADE, SOMETHING LIKE THE PATTERN OF THE LAST DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENTS MAY EVOLVE AND ALL PARTIES UNDERSTAND THERE SHOULD BE AN EFFORT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE SYRIANS," THE AMBASSADOR SAID.

Q: ISRAELI OFFICIALS SAY THE FINAL FORM OF THE AGREEMENT HAS NOT BEEN "SEWED UP." WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

A: THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE OFFICIALS HAD IN MIND. AMBASSADOR'S UNDERSTANDING IS THAT MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT IS FINAL, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES FOR THEIR INFORMATION.

Q: ISRAELIS SAY THAT THE STATIONING OF AMERICAN TECHNICIANS
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IS AN "INEXTRICABLE PART OF THE AGREEMENT" -- WITHOUT WHICH THE AGREEMENT COULD FAIL.

A: THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THE ISRAELIS DO REGARD THE AMERICAN PROPOSAL AS CRUCIAL, BUT THEY UNDERSTAND THAT CONGRESS MUST DEBATE AND SETTLE QUESTION OF AMERICAN PARTICIPATION.

IN GENERAL DISCUSSION AT END OF MEETING, AMBASSADOR TOON

AGREED THAT RIGHT OF ISRAELI CARGO PASSAGE THROUGH SUEZ HAD BEEN
"RECONFIRMED" BY AGREEMENT, AND ON RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTION
SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHEN TEST OF THIS COMMITMENT WOULD BE MADE.

COMMENT: YOU WILL NOTE FROM ABOVE THAT DRUMMOND ARTICLE IS
UNCONSCIONABLE MELANGE OF MY STATEMENTS, HIS VIEWS, AND
ISRAELI MISINFORMATION. RE HIS LAST PARA SUGGESTING THAT
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WOULD BE FURTHER FORMALIZED WHEN
RABIN SEES PRESIDENT, DRUMMOND DID NOT MENTION THIS TO ME AND I
CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT EITHER HE MISUNDERSTOOD HIS ISRAELI
INFORMANTS OR THEY HAVE ONCE MORE MISLEAD AMERICAN INTERLOCUTOR.

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